

to use while on the humanitarian mission.

A few barriers did arise throughout the deployment to include low amounts of Ecoli in the local water supply, but mainly the barriers were in the area of language. Equipped with only five fluent Spanish-speaking professionals, members of the unit found themselves frustrated a few times trying to understand their patients needs. While everyone remained patient and eager to learn the language, a few locals offered to help translate for them.

Antonio Perez came for treatment on the first day and came back as a translator after that. "I like to help and like to be able to help my people," he said.

While the work days lasted from 8am to 6pm, the temperatures hovered in the 90s and the patients lined up at every treatment center at the compound, the positive attitudes of the health care professionals from the 179th never ceased. For many of them this was their first time deploying with the unit and their first time in a third world country.

"I'm glad this was my first deployment," said Senior Airman Marianne Wilson, medical technician. "I've heard the other deployments are just training and I'm glad we came here so I can actually provide medical care."

"It is very rewarding," said Senior Airman Marcus Phelps, hospital administration. "I thank God I'm here to help the less fortunate."

While Stanich was busy in the dental area, he still had time to perform the functions of a commander. Every morning the squadron came together for a briefing and every night they did a brief after action for the day so they knew what to improve on for the next day's business. Stanich worked with the village mayor to

ensure word about the 179th was being spread and the town knew the 179th was there to provide free medical care to anyone who needed it.

"I hope we are setting the standard for other units that follow us," Stanich said.

The humanitarian mission looked so appealing that a medical doctor from the 178th Training Wing in Springfield came along to help out.

Lt. Col. Clay Walsh lived in Belize when he was younger and actually came to Belize on a humanitarian mission in July 1999.

"I speak fluent Spanish and I thought I could help another unit," Walsh said.

Walsh said that having a medical unit from the United States made the people feel good even if there was no long term care that

could be provided. He said the people understood the doctors could not perform miracles, they just wanted a U.S. doctor to tell them they are ok.

"It gives us good training and a sense of accomplishment that we've touched people lives," Walsh said. "If only temporarily."



Dr. Walsh from the 178th MDS helps in Belize.

Awards banquet set for Nov. UTA

The annual 179th Awards Banquet is scheduled for Saturday Nov. 2, 2002 at the Holiday Inn in Mansfield. A social hour begins at 6pm with dinner starting at 7pm and award program beginning at 8pm.

The awards being presented will include Airmen, NCO and Sr. NCO of the Year, along with 2Lt. of the Year, First Sergeant and the Public Affairs Award.

Tickets can be purchased by calling ext. 106 or 122.

New ribbons authorized since 9-11

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Since the War on Terrorism began Sept. 11, some military members are now authorized to wear two additional ribbons.

Personnel who were not previously authorized to wear the National Defense Service Medal may now do so as long as they are on active duty or are a drilling member of a reserve component in good standing.

Members who already wear the ribbon are authorized to wear it with a bronze star device.

The other major change that has taken place applies only to the reserve components.

The Armed Forces Reserve Medal with the "M" device is now authorized for members who served on orders for even one day in any of the following operations...Desert Storm/Shield in the Persian Gulf, Restore Hope in Somalia, Uphold Democracy in Haiti, Joint Endeavor/Guard/Forge in Bosnia, Desert Fox/Northern/Southern Watch in the Persian Gulf, Allied Force in Kosovo, Noble Eagle in the United States and Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Members who have served in more than one contingency will denote the second and each succeeding award of the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with the "M" device by wearing an Arabic number next to the device, indicating the number of times it has been awarded.

For more information contact base personnel.